

Covid-19 Addendum to the Epina y School Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

DFE Schools coronavirus (Covid-19) operational guidance from 8 March 21 states that school's revising their Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy to reflect the return of more pupils.

Key Messages

Epinay School must continue to have regard to the statutory guidance KCSIE 2020.

We must continue to:

- provide a safe environment
- keep children safe
- ensure staff and volunteers have been appropriately checked and risk assessments carried out as required

As children return the designated safeguarding lead and MAKW will require time to:

- support staff and pupils with new safeguarding and welfare concerns
- handle referrals to children's social care and other agencies where appropriate

The designated safeguarding lead will continue to co-ordinate with children's social care, the local safeguarding partners, other agencies and services to identify harm and ensure children and young adults are supported appropriately. DSL/MAKW will speak to school nurses and mental health providers who have continued virtual support to pupils who have not been in school.

Annex to Epina y School's existing safeguarding and child protection policy.

Context

This updated addendum is intended to complement our existing policy document and not to replace the principles, procedures and approach we take to safeguarding the welfare and safety of all our pupils.

Our existing policy continues to be compliant and fit for purpose. It recognises and responds to the key guidance documents

- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2020
- Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018
- Existing Local Authority / Safeguarding Partnership Advice and Guidance

School attendance procedures

School attendance will be mandatory for all pupils from 8 March 21.

The usual rules on school attendance apply, including:

- parents' duty to secure their child's attendance regularly at school
- schools' responsibilities to record attendance and follow up absence
- the ability to issue sanctions, including fixed penalty notices in line with local authorities' codes of conduct

The school acknowledges the importance of attendance in safeguarding pupils and we will follow our procedures to monitor children when they are absent.

Arrangements for pupils not attending school and on-line safety procedures.

Self-isolation and shielding

A small number of pupils will still be unable to attend in line with public health advice to self-isolate because they:

- have symptoms or have had a positive test result
- live with someone who has symptoms or has tested positive and are a household contact
- are a close contact of someone who has coronavirus (COVID-19)

We will continue to provide remote education to pupils who are unable to attend school because they are complying with government guidance or legislation around coronavirus (COVID-19).

We have developed approaches to remote teaching and learning which have adhered to all guidance in respect of both pupil and staff safety. This will continue and staff are reminded of our existing guidance and advice and are expected to continue to remain vigilant in the way they deliver on-line learning, at all times adhering to our agreed policy.

When a **vulnerable** pupil is required to self-isolate, we will:

- notify their social worker, ISIT Education navigator and the head virtual school [South Tyneside or Newcastle]
- agree with the social worker the best way to maintain contact and offer support
- check if a vulnerable pupil is able to access remote education support
- support them to access it
- Daily check in with pupils/young people which is recorded on the Covid Log to ensure all students are accessing remote education

Where pupils remain at home, we will continue to ensure we have regular contact according to our RA agreed procedure, and that we remain aware of and responsive to any causes for concern which might be identified.

At all times staff must continue to follow our agreed procedure for reporting concerns.

Where staff identify a new safeguarding concern in relation to a pupil returning to school following a Covid-19 related absence

When pupils return it is likely that some may have experienced challenging and difficult circumstances during the absence period. Where we are already aware of a vulnerable child, and staff are working to support the child and family, all current policies, procedures and reporting requirements of staff remain the same. For some children, staff may identify or raise a new concern. Staff will use a range of resources to establish pupils' experiences during lockdown.

Some pupils may be experiencing a variety of emotions in response to the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak, such as anxiety, stress or low mood. This may particularly be the case for vulnerable children, including those with a social worker and young carers.

We will increase opportunities for mental and wellbeing through additional pastoral time, as well as focused teaching and learning opportunities to:

- support the rebuilding of friendships and social engagement

- address and equip pupils to respond to issues linked to coronavirus (COVID19)
- support pupils with approaches to improving their physical and mental wellbeing

Our expectations of staff remain the same. Where staff have a cause for concern then they must share that concern with an identified DSL immediately. The DSL will advise on next steps. In accordance with our procedures staff must record the concern and actions taken following our existing school / academy guidance on reporting and recording.

Responding to updated advice and guidance

We continue to work closely with all our partners and external organisations in respect of ensuring our safeguarding response is effective and compliant. Where we receive advice or guidance requiring us to update / revise any aspect of our safeguarding procedures to ensure compliance with our Local Safeguarding Partners arrangements we will ensure this is actioned and relevant documents reviewed.

It is important that all staff and volunteers are aware of this addendum and are kept up to date as it is revised. The revised policy should continue to be made available publicly.

Policy approved by Governors: June 2021

Date of next review by Governors: June 2022